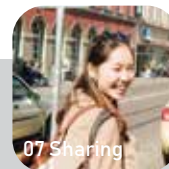
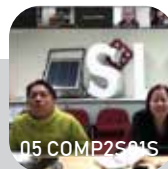
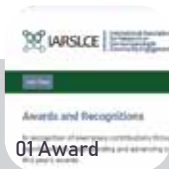


SLLO NEWSLETTER

January, 2021

/Highlights/



SLLO wins the 2020 International Research Award of IARSLCE

Since our establishment as the Office of Service Learning (and subsequently renamed Service-Learning and Leadership Office (SLLO) in September 2019), we have believed in scholarship in service-learning and encouraging colleagues to take a scholarly approach to teaching and learning in service-learning. A number of scholarly outputs have been produced over these several years.



34

Conference Papers



13

Project Manuscripts



5

Book Chapters



5

Journal Articles



3

Books



2

Toolkits

For more details, please go to: <https://polyu.hk/sbmJR>.

This year, we are proud to announce that SLLO has been recognized and selected for the 2020 International Research Award of the International Association for Research on Service-Learning & Community Engagement (IARSLCE)*.

The committee praised our contributions as follows:

Identified “as one of world’s most impressive and impactful service-learning initiatives in higher education,” PolyU has developed international partnerships in places such as Rwanda, Cambodia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, focused on engaging students in tackling complex and significant issues. The impact of these programs on the lives and livelihoods of community partners alongside scholarly contributions about multicultural and cross-cultural engagement showcases the contributions of PolyU to the enhancement of international efforts in service-learning and community engagement.

We are happy, and grateful for the dedication and commitment of our many colleagues and NGO partners for making this possible!

*For details, please go to <https://www.researchslce.org/awards-and-recognitions>.



Service-Learning Symposium for Secondary Schools

SLLO organised an online Service-Learning Symposium for Secondary Schools on 28 November 2020 (Saturday). The symposium attracted over 80 secondary school principals and teachers who are interested in promoting service-learning (SL) in secondary education.

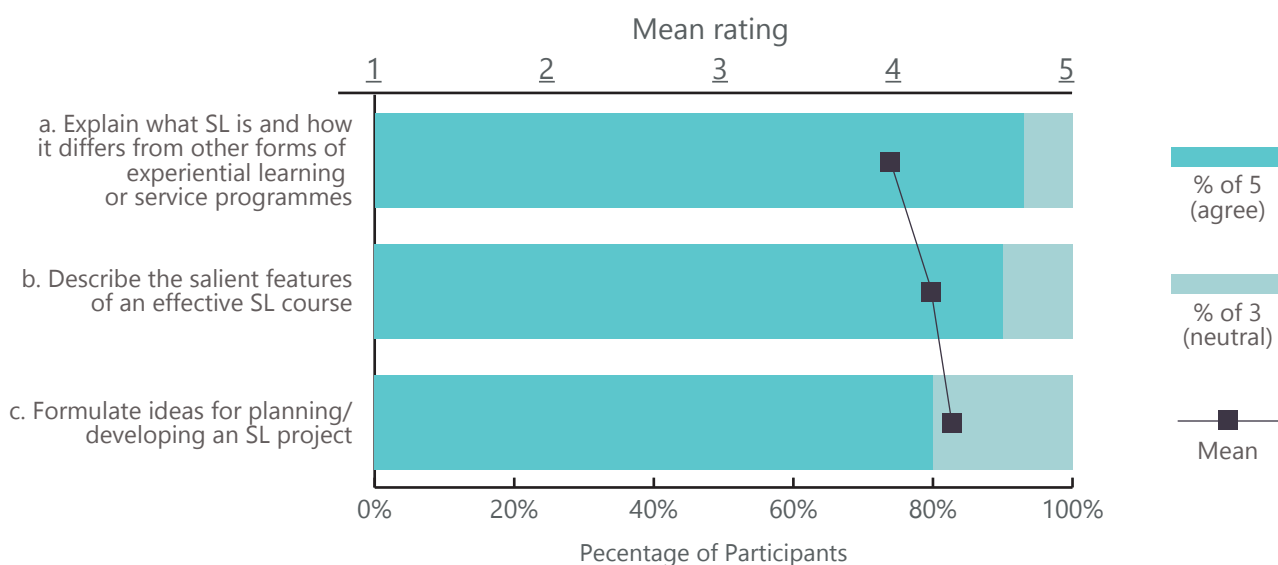
As our keynote speaker and workshop facilitator, we are honoured to have Ms. Susan Ward-Roncalli, a National Board-Certified Teacher with over 30 years of classroom experience and a veteran SL practitioner at secondary sector, to share her insights and experience in implementing SL in secondary schools by delivering a keynote speech entitled "Service-learning in Secondary Education: Value, Implementation Models, and Challenges".



The online symposium offered bilingual simultaneous interpretation, and participants were able to interact and share with, and learn from each other in the breakout discussion session under the facilitation of experienced SL teachers of PolyU.

Participants had a very positive view regarding their overall learning experience of the symposium, with 100% of the participants giving a rating of 3 or above (mean=4.24) (Rating scale: 1=poor; 5=excellent). They also agreed that they were able to achieve the intended learning outcomes of the symposium with the mean ratings of the items ranging from 4.00 to 4.30 (i.e., between agree to strongly agree). Over 80% of the participants clearly indicated that they were interested in collaborating with PolyU to apply SL pedagogy into their subject teaching or other school activities.

Participant Ratings on Learning Outcomes of the Symposium



We are encouraged to see this, and we will follow up and make good use of this opportunity to seek collaboration with secondary schools to promote holistic education through SL in secondary education.

Service-Learning Online Workshop Series



As part of our professional development, for our teachers as well as for the community, SLLO organizes workshops with renowned speakers every year. This year, our Service-Learning Online Workshop Series was held on 8th, 11th, and 15th December 2020.

We are honoured to have Dr Luke Terra, the Director of Community Engaged Learning and Research and Associate Director of the Haas Center for Public Service at Stanford University. Dr Terra conducted the following workshops for us:

Date	Title	Focus	Attendance
8 th Dec 2020	"How the Difficult Past Prepares Students to Engage with a Difficult Present"	Dr Terra shared his insights on the five qualities that make histories difficult, and how teaching the difficult past can prepare students to engage in the difficult present.	90
11 th Dec 2020	"Virtual Engagement: Community Engaged Learning in a time of COVID-19"	The workshop discussed the affordances and constraints of online SL and Community Engagement courses and introduced course examples from a range of disciplines at Stanford University.	107
15 th Dec 2020	"Promising New Directions in Service-Learning and Community Engagement"	Dr Terra shared new innovative approaches in the field of Service-Learning and Community Engagement across the U.S. and how the individual faculty could apply their new innovative approaches to their own institutions and individual teaching practice.	69



The workshops actively encouraged interaction and sharing amongst participants in the breakout discussion sessions and via the chatroom.

How the difficult past prepares students to engage with a difficult present

...
 Luke Terra, PhD
 Director of Community Engaged Learning and Research
 Haas Center for Public Service, Stanford University



The efficacy of the workshop series can be ascertained from the participant feedback. Participants had a very positive view regarding their overall learning experience of each workshop, with 100% of the participants giving a rating of 3 or above (Rating scale: 1=poor; 5=excellent). On a scale of 1 (not useful) to 5 (useful), participants generally indicated that each workshop was useful to them and 100% of the participants gave a rating of 3 or above. There were also quite a lot of positive comments from colleagues:



WORKSHOP 1

“

The insights given by Dr. Luke Terra were useful for me because I could use them to alter how I teach history to my students, provide them with a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the grey areas of history so that they could be more culturally sensitive, and be more critical.

”



WORKSHOP 3

“

The series has been helpful and eye-opening. Really treasure the opportunity to learn and get to know the challenges and idea from different part of the world.

”

WORKSHOP 2

“

The sharing of Luke and Deland was very helpful and insightful. I appreciate that their sharing was really concrete and direct as to establishing the context and addressing issues with accessible solutions.

”



Lessons Learnt from Conducting a Large Online Service-Learning Class - Coordination, Supervision and Assessment

The Community of Practice in Service-Learning (CoP-SL) regularly organizes workshops and sharing sessions to provide a means of exchanging effective practices on SL pedagogies. On 11 January 2021, CoP-SL held a workshop on "Lessons Learnt from Conducting a Large Online Service-Learning Class – Coordination, Supervision and Assessment". The teaching team from COMP2S01S shared their experiences in the workshop.

Due to the coronavirus outbreak, many schools have had to go online and many children are locked down at home. Non-curricular activities have also been cancelled. In Semester 1 of this academic year, Department of Computing (COMP) and Service-Learning and Leadership Office (SLLO) collaborated to design and offer *COMP2S01S Technology Beyond Borders: Service Learning across Cultural, Ethnic and Community Lines* to facilitate 120 PolyU students in organizing online experiential and problem-based STEM learning workshops for around 700 Hong Kong primary school students. Our students applied their learnt VR techniques to create VR tour websites, so the primary students, even though locked down at home, can go on field trips to Hong Kong Observatory, Hong Kong Science Museum and Electrical and Mechanical Services Department through the online platform. Our students also designed learning activities based on the primary school syllabus so that the workshop can strengthen the knowledge of the primary students based on their curriculum.

Dr. Grace Ngai from SLLO and COMP, Dr. Peter Ng from COMP, and Ms. Jessie Kar from SLLO shared how they brought their service projects online to cope with COVID-19 restrictions, how they managed the class and facilitated student engagement in large class size, and how they assessed students to ensure fairness in grading. Participants had a very positive view regarding their learning experience of the workshop, with 100% of the participants giving a rating of 4 or above (Rating scale: 1 = poor; 5 = excellent). Some of them indicated that the sharing was useful and inspired their practices.



Acknowledgment for External Funding Support

SLLO has received two external funding grants to support a STEM SL project and a SL teacher development programme in PolyU.

We would like to thank State Street Asia Limited for a donation of USD50,000 (around HKD387,600) for STEM SL development in PolyU. The funded project - "Develop and apply STEM skills to help promoting healthy ageing" in 2021 is hosted by the Department of Biomedical Engineering with the aims to nurture the young generation with the critical "21st-century skills" - civic and ethical literacy, and scientific literacy through serving the needy elderly with their STEM knowledge. .



The project will equip 200 PolyU students to train over 400 secondary school students to develop product prototypes that meet the real-life needs of the elders. Moreover, a territory-wide STEM competition and a crowdsourcing web portal will be developed for showcasing the products, exchanging ideas, and sharing resources to promote "healthy ageing" in Hong Kong.



A funding of HKD40,000 has also been granted by the Shanghai-Hong Kong University Alliance to partially support the "Service-Learning Teacher Development through Blended Learning" in 2020-21. This is a professional development programme for academic SL in higher education of Hong Kong and Mainland China.

Student's Sharing: Re-connection with the People in the World

Rachel Wong, a Year 4 student of the School Design, participated in a 24-hour "Global Re-connection Hackathon" organized by SLLO in October 2020 to collaborate with university students in other countries to investigate the challenges brought by the global health crisis and create a short video proposal to present a potential solution. She is also taking the SL subject COMP3S02 Socially Responsible Global Leadership in a Digital World offered by the Department of Computing in 2020/21. For her service project, she will be working with secondary students in Hong Kong and Africa to create 360 videos.



Having gone to exchange and growing up with friends from different cultures, I have always been interested in cross-cultural exchange and learning about how to be a better global citizen in the world. When I saw the poster for COMP3S02, I was immediately intrigued because of all the relevant topics that it included—digital technology, social issues, cross-cultural collaboration and leadership. The fact that the course was in collaboration with the University of Maryland was a definite plus. Not only would it give me a chance to meet new friends from all over the world, but also an opportunity in collaborating and learning from each other on a project. As I progress in my design education and career, I have been increasingly interested in UX/UI, working in a multi-disciplinary team, collaborating with various people from different backgrounds and cultures, which is something that I hope to have in my future jobs as well. Hence, when it was shown that a hackathon would take place during the course, I thought that was the perfect opportunity to give it a go and I am truly grateful for the learning experience.



COMP3S02 was definitely a commitment. It was a Saturday morning class. Not only that—some weeks it would be at 7:30am due to the time difference with the student from University of Maryland. However, when I applied, I knew that it was not one of those classes where it would be easy and you can get a good grade in. I was committed in getting the most out of it and looking back I truly do not regret this decision at all! During the lessons, I think what stood out to me the most was the practicality and relevance of the content taught. In the first few weeks we learnt about the different leadership styles from various cultures, intercultural competence, how to be a socially responsible leader and more. Being socially and culturally conscious is truly important nowadays. Not only is it interesting and introspective for me to reflect upon that, but it also makes me more aware of how I work with people and how I can improve on my communication skills in different settings. Ultimately, it heightens my sensitivity and empathy for others, being more aware of how I approach and resolve conflict in a group, diving deeper than the surface level and trying to understand more about each individual.

In the hackathon, I felt very lucky to be able to have met my wonderful teammates. We were all very engaged and determined to do well in the hackathon, but more importantly, I really felt like I was supported by them, and that I could trust members on the project. Even though the time difference was hard, and that coming up with a potential solution to a social problem heightened by the global pandemic was not easy, I am thankful that all of us were conscious of making sure



everyone's opinion mattered and we all understood that even if we had differing opinions, it does not mean one's side was better or worse than the other. I feel that each of us held an important role in the team, using each of our own talents and strengths to make the project better. In the end, our team proposed an online platform that aims to virtually connect university students with peers and industry mentors to develop skills necessary for the workplace, since the traditional means to gain job experiences are extremely limited due to the current pandemic. Our idea got second-runner up and we were all very pleased with the results!

Looking back, I am very happy that I took this opportunity and gained so much from it. Though staying up for the hackathon, working through the semester with other deadlines, and working with classmates might not always be the easiest job, but I still feel very proud to have participate in a cross-cultural, cross-disciplinary, socially engaging hackathon. It made me realise that I actually thrive in these environments and it has helped me narrowed down my focus on what I want in a job. Because I was the UX/UI designer for the team, it has also ignited my interest for human-centred design. Specifically, in using my design skills for meaningful and impactful purposes to establish connections, communicate meaning and foster change.

I would like to thank the teachers in COM3S02 for taking so much time and effort in preparing for the lessons and hackathon but also caring so much about social responsibility and our personal growth!